



**Notice of Entry of Appearance  
as Attorney or Accredited Representative**  
Department of Homeland Security

**DHS  
Form G-28**  
OMB No. 1615-0105  
Expires 02/29/2016

**Part 1. Information About Attorney or Accredited Representative**

Name and Address of Attorney or Accredited Representative

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)

1.b. Given Name (First Name)

1.c. Middle Name

2. Name of Law Firm or Recognized Organization

3. Name of Law Student or Law Graduate

4. State Bar Number

5.a. Street Number

5.b. Street Name

5.c. Apt. ☒ Ste. ☐ Flr. ☐

5.d. City or Town

5.e. State  5.f. Zip Code

5.g. Postal Code

5.h. Province

5.i. Country

6. Daytime Phone Number (  )  -

7. E-Mail Address of Attorney or Accredited Representative

**Part 2. Eligibility Information For Attorney or Accredited Representative**

(Check applicable item(s) below)

1. ☒ I am an attorney eligible to practice law in, and a member in good standing of, the bar of the highest court(s) of the following State(s), possession(s), territory(ies), commonwealth(s), or the District of Columbia.

1.a.

- 1.b. I (choose one) ☒ am not ☐ am subject to any order of any court or administrative agency disbaring, suspending, enjoining, restraining, or otherwise restricting me in the practice of law. (If you are subject to any order(s), explain fully in the space below.)

1.b.1.

2. ☐ I am an accredited representative of the following qualified nonprofit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization established in the United States, so recognized by the Department of Justice, Board of Immigration Appeals pursuant to 8 CFR 292.2. Provide the name of the organization and the expiration date of accreditation.

2.a. Name of Recognized Organization

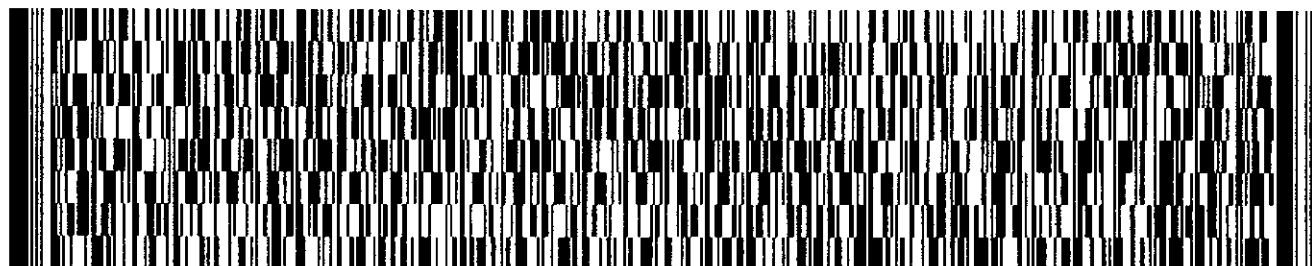
2.b. Date Accreditation expires  
(mm/dd/yyyy) ►

3. ☐ I am associated with

3.a.

the attorney or accredited representative of record who previously filed Form G-28 in this case, and my appearance as an attorney or accredited representative is at his or her request. If you check this item, also complete **number 1 (1.a. - 1.b.1.) or number 2 (2.a. - 2.b.) in Part 2 (whichever is appropriate).**

4. ☐ I am a law student or law graduate working under the direct supervision of the attorney or accredited representative of record on this form in accordance with the requirements in 8 CFR 292.1(a)(2)(iv).



**Part 3. Notice of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative**

This appearance relates to immigration matters before (select one):

1. ☒ USCIS - List the form number(s)

1.a. I-589

2. ☐ ICE - List the specific matter in which appearance is entered

2.a.

3. ☐ CBP - List the specific matter in which appearance is entered

3.a.

I hereby enter my appearance as attorney or accredited representative at the request of:

4. Select only one: ☒ Applicant ☐ Petitioner  
☐ Respondent (ICE, CBP)

**Name of Applicant, Petitioner, or Respondent**

5.a. Family Name (Last Name) Kovkov

5.b. Given Name (First Name) Aleks

5.c. Middle Name Yuryevich

5.d. Name of Company or Organization, if applicable

**NOTE:** Provide the mailing address of Petitioner, Applicant, or Respondent and not the address of the attorney or accredited representative, **except when a safe mailing address is permitted** on an application or petition filed with Form G-28.

6.a. Street Number and Name 1729 35th ST

6.b. Apt. ☒ Ste. ☐ Flr. ☐ 7

6.c. City or Town Washington

6.d. State DC 6.e. Zip Code 20007

7. Provide A-Number and/or Receipt Number

Pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 and DHS policy, I hereby consent to the disclosure to the named Attorney or Accredited Representative of any record pertaining to me that appears in any system of records of USCIS, ICE, or CBP.

- 8.a. Signature of Applicant, Petitioner, or Respondent

- 8.b. Date

(mm/dd/yyyy)

7/27/2014

**Part 4. Signature of Attorney or Accredited Representative**

I have read and understand the regulations and conditions contained in 8 CFR 103.2 and 292 governing appearances and representation before the Department of Homeland Security. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the information I have provided on this form is true and correct.

1. Signature of Attorney or Accredited Representative

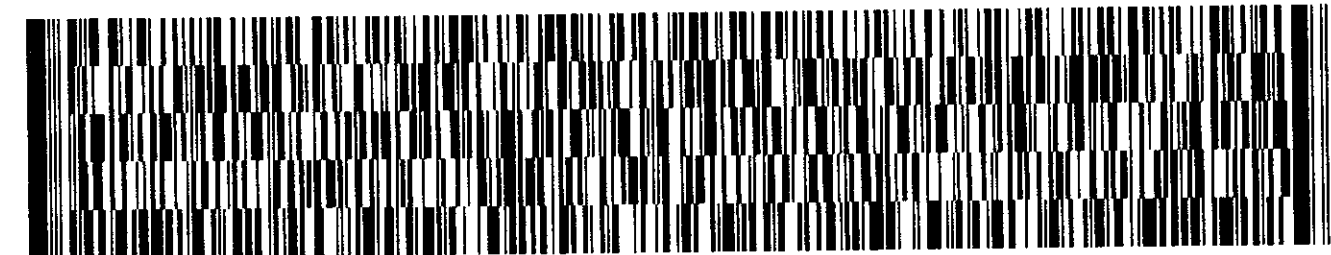
2. Signature of Law Student or Law Graduate

3. Date

(mm/dd/yyyy)

**Part 5. Additional Information**

- 1.



### **Sworn affidavit of Aleks Kovkov**

I, Aleks Yuryevich Kovkov, write this statement in support of my application for asylum. I state that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

1. I was born on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1981, in the city of Perm of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), also known as the Soviet Union. Now it is a city in Russia. My mother, Tatiana Gennadievna Kovkov, resides in Moscow, Russia. She is retired, but she still works as a hardware store administrator. My father, Yury Vladimirovich Kovkov, also resides in Moscow. He works now in the security service of the Australian Embassy. I have no siblings.

2. I entered the United States of America, for my third and final time, on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014, to attend a human rights conference in Washington, DC. I received threats and suffered abuse in Russia because of my sexual orientation, my HIV infection, my membership in the "Rainbow Association" LGBT human rights organization (in Moscow, Russia), and my activism in fighting against the Russian government's policies that discriminate against LGBT people in Russia. I am applying for asylum because of the harm that I have suffered in Russia as a gay man and as an HIV-positive individual, because of my political activities as an LGBT activist, and because of my fear of being persecuted if I will go back my home country (Russia) due my membership in the LGBT social group, and my political opinion and activities as an LGBT activist.

#### **My childhood growing-up in Russia**

3. I grew up in a family that worked around the clock. My earliest memories, when I was about five years old, were of my family moving from Perm to a small village in Siberia. My mother was educated as a cooking technologist, but she worked as a shop assistant because it was impossible to find such a specialization in a small village. My father worked as a health officer. Because my father did not agree with the policies of the Communist Party, he lost his job, and my family was forced to move.

In 1990 my family moved to the town of Yemva in the north of Russia. To survive, my parents started their own small business (a chain of grocery stores) and it was successful, but after the economic crisis in Russia in 1998 my parents' business began to fail because of high inflation and the decline in people's purchasing power. While my parents were running their business, my family endured profound stress because of racketeering and the threats of gangsters, extortions and illegal rulings of corrupt authorities, and much more. But although my parents suffered great emotional turmoil and there was a lot of arguing in my family, my parents always loved me and I tried to help them and to support them morally. In the midst of this situation, I realized that the main thing that would help me to survive in Russia was education, so I devoted almost all my time to studying.

4. I graduated from high school in Yemva in June, 1998.

5. I knew from my pubescence that I was gay. Of course, I hid my homosexuality from my parents, from my friends, and other people, because I feared persecution. Russian society is extremely homophobic. Although no one knew that I was gay, I was often insulted for being gay, because many people suspected me of homosexuality because I avoided dating girls.

I told my parents about my homosexuality only after I moved to Moscow for University and became an independent person. It was important for me to know my parents loved me for who I was, and that they viewed me clearly, not through a prism of lies. There were plenty of loud arguments and misunderstandings due to my being gay, but my parents finally accepted me the way I am. I am eternally thankful to them for this.

Later, about 2010, I became openly gay, because leading a double life was caused me terrific stress.

**My life and LGBT activism in Moscow, 1999-2014**

6. To be gay in Russia is to be persecuted every day. For this reason, I do not specify and catalog the insults I suffered - it was an almost daily occurrence.

7. I entered the law faculty of the Lomonosov Moscow State University in September, 1999.

8. In summer of 2001 I was caught by about ten Nazis at Moscow metro station "Octyabrskaya." The Nazis insulted me for being gay. They called me a "fag", then they beat my head against the wall, and when I fell down on the train platform they kicked me in the body, head, and face. After the beating, they robbed me. It was rush hour and the metro station was crowded, but nobody helped me. I did not go to police because it was useless – police do not protect gays in Russia. I was admitted to a clinic, where I was diagnosed a multiple soft tissue injuries and a dislocated jaw. Although I received medical treatment, a problem with my jaw still exists.

9. I graduated from the Lomonosov Moscow State University in May, 2004.

10. In November, 2005 I got a job as a lawyer in Russia's largest energy corporation. In June, 2006 the company signed an employment contract with me.

11. In December 2011 I was hired by GPB "EnergoEffect Ltd" in the position of the General Legal Counsel of the Legal and Corporate Affairs Department. GPB "EnergoEffect Ltd" is the daughter company of "Gazprombank" (Open Joint Stock Company) (GPB (OJSC)), one of the largest shareholders in this company is Gazprom (OJSC), and the largest shareholder of Gazprom (OJSC) is the Russian Federation.

12. On February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Federal Law # 14-FZ, "On the amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and the certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation in order to stiffen the penalties for sexual offenses committed against minors," was enacted. According to this law penalties for comparable offenses become higher for LGBT people and lower for heterosexuals.

13. In February, 2012, after socializing with my friends in the "Voda" club in Moscow, I went outside and walked to my car to drive home. Since it was a club for gays, it was clear to others that I was gay. I was attacked, beaten, and robbed by three men and one woman, who were shouting homophobic curses at me while hitting me. I suffered heavy blows to my chest and stomach, but no bones were broken, and my head was uninjured, so there was no urgent reason to seek medical help. I did not complain to police because it was useless - since the attack occurred near a gay club, it was not possible even to lie to police officers that it was just a common robbery and not a hate crime against me as a gay person.

14. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in the electric train at the Moscow Metro, unidentified persons screamed, "Death to homosexuals! You are a disgrace to our nation!" and attacked with a fire extinguisher and beat my boyfriend and I. My boyfriend suffered injuries described in the medical report made for the police as "grievous bodily harm to human health on the basis of the physical danger, creating a direct threat to life" (potentially life-threatening injuries).

From the platform of the Metro station we were brought to the police room. We told the police officers about the homophobic assault and beating, and asked them to call an ambulance. The Police officers did not provide any assistance, did not call an ambulance despite our requests and complaints about our injuries, and forbid me to call an ambulance myself. Instead, they told us that they would not call an ambulance, and would not let us go until we signed releases that we had no claims against the police and the Moscow Metro. Because we feared retaliation from the police department from any complaints against the actions of the police officers, we did not file complaints against these actions when testifying about the attack and promised that the behavior of the police would not be mentioned further. The only thing we did is complain about the beatings done to us by unidentified persons. A



criminal case was initiated on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The police refused to recognize the homophobic motive in this crime, noting that our assailants beat us "unreasonably, acting from hooligan motives." After that attack, I decided to become an LGBT activist.

15. On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013, I participated in an LGBT rally against homophobic laws in Russia. Approximately 100 people gathered in Gorky Park in Moscow. When we started to put up banners, the police appeared, and a homophobic crowd started to insult and to beat us. I was sprayed in the face with tear gas. The police did not protect us. Police officers were polite with homophobic attackers, and only LGBT people were arrested, from what I saw.

16. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, I had a traffic accident in Moscow. I suffered head and chest impact, a brain concussion, and glass shards under my skin. I temporarily lost consciousness and I was bleeding. I told ambulance men that I was HIV-positive. I was brought to the N.V. Sklifosovsky Science & Research Institute of Emergency Medicine whose personnel had been informed of my HIV status by the ambulance men. I was denied medical care because of my HIV-positive status. Instead of getting help, I was accused of attempted suicide, and sent directly to the psychiatric department, where I spent 4 hours before I was kicked out on the street without any medical assistance. I filed complaints to the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation, the Head of the Moscow City Health Department, and the Acting Head of the Federal Service on Surveillance in Healthcare and asked them to investigate this situation and to hold the guilty persons accountable for their failure to render medical assistance to a patient. All the mentioned officials refused to investigate this case.

17. In June of 2013 I become a member of the "Rainbow Association" (Moscow) - one of Russia's largest LGBT human rights organizations fighting for LGBT rights and freedom.

18. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Federal Law # 135-FZ, "On the amendments to the article 5 of the Federal Law 'On the protection of children from the harmful information to their health and development' and some legislative acts of the Russian Federation in order to protect children from the information that promotes rejection of traditional family values," (the so-called "Mizulina Law") was enacted. It bans the distribution of "propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations" to minors and makes it illegal to hold any public demonstrations in favor of LGBT rights, to speak in defense of LGBT rights, and to distribute any information related to LGBT rights.

19. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013, the Federal Law # 167-FZ, "On the amendments to the certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation on the issues of care for orphans and children left without parental care," was enacted. According to this law "the adoptive parents can be adult persons, except persons in union entered into between persons of a same sex marriage recognized and registered in accordance with the laws of the State in which the marriage is allowed, as well as persons who are nationals of that State and not married." In effect, this law banned LGBT persons from adopting children.

20. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013, I participated in the "Milonov versus LGBT" public event at Arbat Street, Moscow. It was a short theatrical performance against the "Mizulina Law," in which the ghost of homophobic deputy Milonov was defeated. The videos of this event are available on the Internet, including YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3l7BGsDHc8>). In their comments on this video many people express hatred towards LGBT persons, insult us, and call for our destruction.

21. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, I participated in the "Rainbow Heart" public event at Arbat Street, Moscow. It was a gay "flash mob" against the hatred directed at LGBT, which resulted in a conflict with a homophobic crowd that chanted insulting slogans at us and tried to assault us. The videos of this event are available on the internet, including on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlc9WQ2DIHU>). In their comments on this video many people express hatred towards LGBT, insult us, call for our destruction, and threaten us with physical violence.

22. From November 20<sup>th</sup> to November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, I took part in the international LGBT conference in Ankara, Turkey organized by the Pink Life (Pembe Hayat) LGBTT Solidarity Association (Turkey) and connected to the Transgender Day of Remembrance. On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013, I participated in

a rally against homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and other phobias held against the LGBT community. The agenda of this conference included the subject of Russia's LGBT movement and Putin's so-called "gay propaganda" law. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, I delivered a lengthy lecture that I had written on the law banning "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" and other legislation that effectively discriminates against LGBT people in the Russian Federation.

23. Being an LGBT activist and a public events organizer, I filed the required notices for holding rallies on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013, which were aimed against discrimination, violation of the rights and freedom of the LGBT community, and violence towards LGBT in Russia. I received written refusals from the Prefecture of the Central Administrative District of the City of Moscow to grant permission for these rallies. Those decisions were illegal, groundless, and violated the rights and freedoms provided by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Russian Federation federal laws, other regulations, and also the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. I applied to the court with Petitions for Appeal against these decisions, but both court decisions were to dismiss my petitions – citing the "anti-gay-propaganda" legislation. In connection with the rally on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013, I also received a phone call from the Prosecutor's Office threatening that if the rally were held, other participants and I would be arrested and fined. We still held a rally, but in a different place, so we were not caught by the police. The article about this rally is attached to my materials.

24. Since September of 2012 I encountered discrimination in the workplace (GPB "EnergoEffect Ltd") as a homosexual and as a person living with HIV. The goal of the employer was my dismissal from my job. I started a campaign against my employer to fight with existing in the company homophobia and AIDS-phobic promotion. The purpose of the campaign was to persuade the company to establish regulations prohibiting discrimination of its employees on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV infection, and other grounds. As a result of this effort, I was threatened with having a criminal case fabricated against me, and that I will be injured or killed. I was fired on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014. It became impossible for me to find a new job anymore, because the information about me as an LGBT activist, as well as my recent conflict with my employer, is available on the internet.

25. Life in Moscow has become extremely dangerous for me. After a campaign against my employer I also became recognizable on the street, that is a grave danger to my health and my life.

### **My life in the United States of America**

26. I have been to the United States of America before: in 1996 in California and, in 1997, Wisconsin. I was a teenager, and the purpose of my both previous visits was education.

27. On March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014, I came to the United States of America to attend a human rights conference in Washington, DC.

28. I am still a member of the "Rainbow Association" in Russia (I interact with LGBT activists, provide consulting services, etc.) and I am a member of Spectrum Human Rights Alliance here in the United States (headquartered in Vienna, Virginia). I have the title of Project Coordinator in Spectrum Human Rights Alliance.

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014, I participated in a rally near the White House, where LGBT activists, our mouths taped, expressed our silent protest against the denial of the human rights and dignity of Russian LGBT.

Here in the United States, I also participated in the development and adoption of the Gender and SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) Safeguard – the World Bank's policy to protect the interests of LGBT people in projects financed by the World Bank.

29. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014, Bill # 485729-6, "On amendments to some legislative acts of the Russian Federation (in terms of improving the legislation on public events)," was introduced in the State Duma of the Russian Federation. According to this Bill there will be a criminal liability for repeated (more than one time over a period of six months) violations of the order of organizing or holding

meetings, rallies, demonstrations, marches, and pickets. Violators could be sentenced with up to five years imprisonment. Thus Russian authorities criminalize any public criticism of the State. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, it was decided by the State Duma to adopt this Bill in the first reading (Decision # 4347-6 GD). Since May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 until October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (which is four and a half months), I participated in four public events on LGBT issues, one of which I organized myself. None of them were permitted by the authorities.

30. I am applying for asylum and ask that you grant my application for asylum. I suffered much in Russia. I am afraid for my life. I cannot return to Russia because of the harm that I have suffered in Russia as a gay, as an HIV-positive person, and as an LGBT activist. I also cannot return to Russia because I am certain to be persecuted again. Thank you.



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Aleks Yuryevich Kovkov

July 27, 2014

Date

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSLATION

I, Larry Poltavtsev, hereby certify that I am competent to translate the attached document from the Russian language to the English language, and that the foregoing translation is a true and accurate translation to the best of my abilities.

I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my abilities.

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014

    Larry Poltavtsev     Signature

Name: Larry Poltavtsev  
President, Spectrum Human Rights Alliance

Address: 8320 Old Courthouse Road,  
Ste. 200, Vienna, VA 22182